

Laboratory Certification Standards Review Council Meeting Minutes From 11/18/2005

Attendance

Council Members: Paul Junio (Chair), George Bowman (Vice Chair), Katie Edgington, Randy Herwig, Steve Jossart, Kurt Knuth

DNR Staff: David Webb, Greg Pils, Rick Mealy

Others in Attendance: R.T. Krueger (Northern lake Service), Paul Harris (Davy Laboratories)

Summary and Action Items

At this meeting the Certification Standards Review Council:

- approved the minutes from their August 18, 2005 meeting
- heard a summary of the State Lab of Hygiene Survey regarding laboratory preparedness in the event of a testing emergency and the formation of a laboratory network to handle such testing should an event occur.
- were updated on progress towards Natural Resource Board approval of NR 149 changes
- were notified of the availability of audit checklists for the wastewater parameters (BOD, TSS, ammonia, phosphorus) and quality control)
- were updated on the feedback from the LabCert-funded ICP training session held several days prior to this Council meeting.
- agreed to develop a list of 3-5 training priorities per member, which would be shared at the next Council session.
- tentatively scheduled the Council's next meeting for Thursday, February 16, 2006

Agenda Items

I. Check in/Agenda Repair

A. No additions or changes were made to the agenda.

II. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

A. The Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes as amended by minor edits suggested by Junio (1) and Herwig (3). (Herwig/Bowman).

III. APHL Project Survey Results & Discussion

A. John Chapin (State Lab of Hygiene) presented the results of a survey regarding laboratory preparedness and the potential formation of a network of testing laboratories that could provide testing in the event of a major emergency. Sent to about 450 labs either certified or registered to performing testing in Wisconsin, results were received from about 170 labs. Mr. Chapin offered his summary as a draft and requested comments.

The goal of the survey was to gather data that did not already exist as part of an existing database (e.g., the DNR Lab Certification database). Questions to be answered through the survey include,

- "Who are we, collectively, as an environmental lab community?",
- "Can we develop a network of laboratories to provide support in response to an emergency event?",
- "Does the State Lab of Hygiene have a role in this network?", and
- "Where do we stand on the issue of trust and competition?"

IV. Fourth Quarter Variance Requests

A. Greg Pils reported that one request for variance was received (and denied) during the past quarter.

B. A laboratory requested a variance to exempt their lab from code requirements s. NR 149.13, Wis. Admin. Code) to analyze GGA at a minimum, frequency of weekly based on their routine sample volume. Pils stated that the laboratory's request was denied because it focused on EPA guidance regarding method flexibility, which is not applicable to state rules, and failed to address how the laboratory would assess the accuracy of its BOD

determinations in the absence of weekly GGA analyses. Pils also noted that the lab was not analyzing GGA standards at the time of their last audit, and likely requested this variance so they would not have to analyze GGA standards in the future.

V. FY 2005 Audit Totals and Current Program Audit Status

- A. Greg Pils began the discussion by pointing out that the annual audit/report/closure goals for the Central Office have been adjusted down from 44 to 36 each year in order to reflect the declining number of labs and revised audit frequency goals. The 36 figure reflects a goal to visit each lab every 3 ½ years.
- B. Pils noted that the Program has slipped a bit in that the number of labs that haven't been audited within 3.5 years has climbed to seven (7). Following a question from Randy Herwig, Pils emphasized that all the labs with an audit priority of June 2006 or earlier have been assigned to an auditor.
- C. George Bowman asked about the number of labs that had been audited as long as six (6) months previous, but no audit report has been generated. Dave Webb responded that in some cases there are valid reasons for the delay, but not in others. He is dealing with individual situations where there is no good reason for the delay.
- D. As for the Regional laboratories, Pils noted that the two labs with older audit priorities resulted from an error in which the auditors involved each believed the labs were the others' responsibility. Audits have subsequently been scheduled for both facilities.

Cumulative Totals

Central Office			Regional		
Total*		Annual Goals	Total*		Annual Goals
Audits	12	36	Audits	32	101
Reports	13	36	Reports	26	101
Closures	13	36	Closures	17	101

Quarterly Totals

1 st Quarter		2 nd Quarter*		3 rd Quarter		4 th Quarter	
CENTRAL OFFICE							
Audits	7	Audits	5	Audits		Audits	
Reports	10	Reports	3	Reports		Reports	
Closures	12	Closures	1	Closures		Closures	
REGIONAL							
Audits	22	Audits	10	Audits		Audits	
Reports	15	Reports	11	Reports		Reports	
Closures	7	Closures	10	Closures		Closures	

Total Labs by Responsibility

CO (Central Office)	123	302 Labs
RC (Northeast Region)	39	
WC (West Central Region)	87	
SC (South Central Region)	86	
SE (Southeast Region)	90	
O (Other/Reciprocity Labs)	10Labs certified via reciprocal agreement – not audited by WI LabCert

VI. N-Hexane Solvent Purity & Method 1664A Options

- A.** Greg Pils provided a brief overview of Hexane Extractable Materials (HEM) method 1664A and described the issue at hand: the difficulty in obtaining 85% purity hexane. Pils added that initially the LabCert group considered allowing the use of a lesser purity solvent provided the lab could achieve Accuracy and Precision data which met method specifications. During the week prior to this Council meeting, however, Pils received a call from Bill Telliard (EPA), who indicated that the EPA would absolutely not accept data generated using hexane of less than 85% purity.
- B.** Paul Junio cautioned members and attendees to be sure to check their Certificate of Assay (COA) with each purchase of n-hexane. Laboratories within his firm have reported numerous instances in which the label of solvent purity did not match the Certificate of Assay provided with each. Junio added that, to utilize the lesser purity solvent, his labs were planning to mix a volume of 95% purity solvent with the lower grade (assume purity = 60%) to produce a mixture of at least 85% purity n-hexane. He wanted assurance that the practice would be accepted by LabCert program auditors.
- C.** Pils responded that his initial concerns at Junio's approach were (1) it was not something addressed in the method, and (2) what is the impact if the 35% impurities in "65% purity hexane" if the impurities are not hexanes?

VII. NR 149 Revision

- A.** Dave Webb began the discussion by announcing that the proposed rule is on the agenda for the December 7, 2005 Natural Resources Board meeting. He will have 15 minutes to present the item and intends to indicate that there are concerns out there, but that this process will allow us to get the information out for public comment and we can address the concerns as such.
- B.** Webb indicated that there had been some suggestions to send a letter out to all labs indicating the availability of the draft Code and where to obtain it. Katie Edgington emphasized the importance of getting such a letter out well in advance of public hearings so that the lab community would have time to digest it..
- C.** Paul Junio announced that the WELA labs' website [www.wislabs.org] has a public forum on NR 149 comments. He will have the webmaster auto-forward any such comments to Diane and Alfredo.

VIII. Audit Checklist Development Progress Report

- A.** Dave Webb summarized progress to date on this task, which was assigned to Camille Johnson. Dave currently has the second draft of method specific (WWTP parameters) checklists plus a separate checklist for quality control. He believes this should be the final draft, as all staff comments have been addressed in this version.
- B.** Webb indicated that he would make these available to auditors shortly and they'll be posted on the website. He sees the checklists as more of a prompter for auditors than a strict plan of action. He went on to emphasize that these checklists are not designed to "catch" 100% of a lab's deficiencies. His desire is to avoid scenarios such as a lab saying, "You can't cite me for _____, because it was not on the checklist."
- C.** Paul Harris stated that he valued the checklists because they provide a good summary of what the program considers to be deficiencies for particular test...i.e., "what you'll get 'gigged' on in an audit".

IX. ICP Training Session Recap

- A.** George Bowman reported that the session had 65 attendees. While there were a few snafus, he generally reported great feedback. The key aspect of the session was reporting the results of participating labs on a challenge ICP "round robin" sample prepared by Chuck Wibby of Wibby Environmental.
- B.** Paul Harris agreed indicated that his folks walked away feeling very positive and with a list of things they wanted to try back at the lab. He indicated that he'd like to see this type of training repeated annually.
- C.** Bowman indicated that he had so many requests for an aliquot of the challenge sample around which the session was based that he will look into the possibility of purchasing additional sample from Wibby Environmental. Bowman also credited fellow SLH chemist DeWayne Kennedy-Parker for doing the majority of the presenting. It

was agreed that Kennedy-Parker did a great job and that he is viewed as a colleague rather than a supervisor or regulator.

- D.** Greg Pils wrapped the discussion up by indicating that it is his intent to build the training money into the budget again for fiscal 2007.

X. Ideas for Remaining FY2006 Outreach Funding

- A.** As part of the original \$11,500 allocation, George Bowman indicated that he had approached Randy Herwig about working with WWOA to put on BOD training sessions in March and April.
- B.** Webb reminded the group that \$15,000 had been budgeted for fiscal 2006, which leaves an additional \$3500 yet to be allocated.
- C.** After some discussion, Council members agreed to put together their own 3-5 item “wish” lists for training, which would be shared at the next Council meeting. Webb asked that “Code training” not be included on the lists as any Code related training will be conducted as a necessary part of the Code revision process.

XI. Other Program and DNR Business

- A.** Greg Pils reminded the Council that as of June 30, 2006, the following Council members’ terms expire:
- 2nd (final) term: George Bowman (rep. State Lab) , Paul Junio (rep. Commercial Labs), Marcia Kuehl (Interested Party)
 - 1st term: Kurt Knuth (rep. Lg Muni. WWTP).
- B.** Pils also summarized the status of proposed changes to ch. NR 700, Wis. Adm. Code.
- C.** Dave Webb indicated that, 2-3 months prior, the Bureau lost a staff member whose position was paid in part by LabCert funds. Consequently, the program has half a position (FTE) available. Webb indicated that he was in the early stages of evaluating what to do with the position.

XII. Council Member Issues

- A.** No new issues were raised.

XIII. Future Meeting Date

- A.** The next Council meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, February 16, 2006. The meeting was tentatively scheduled to be held at the State Laboratory of Hygiene.